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# Church Turns Committee Around

For years, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has been a faint echo of the White House. Presidents have proclaimed foreign policy, and the committee has bounced back constant blips of approval from its lofty heights of Capitol Hill.

If Lyndon Johnson wanted a Bay of Tonkin resolution to legitimize a disastrous war in Vietnam, the committee provided the rubber stamp. If Richard Nixon wanted to bomb Cambodia in secret, there were few rumblings of protest from the committee.

But under Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho) the committee is no longer the spavined thing of the past. He has reorganized the staff into a crack foreign policy team and has transformed the committee into a bulwark of strength.

In the White House, President Carter has been guided by a hidden compass of his own divining. He has moved from a diplomacy of conciliation and detente to a policy of ultimatum and showdown, wobbling all the way.

Church has volunteered sound, secret advice to keep the Ship of State from running aground. He has encouraged the growth of amity between the United States and the Soviet Union, but he is not deceived by a false amity that is merely a cover for Soviet intrigue.

He quietly encouraged the president to stand firm in Cuba, which has become a base for Soviet military operations. Carter at first declared the presence of a Soviet combat brigade 90 miles from our shores was "unacceptable" and threatened to "take appropriate action."

Then he waffled, saying "the bri-

gade issue is certainly no reason for a retreat to the cold war." His backdown not only failed to prevent but also helped to precipitate a renewal of the cold war. His failure to challenge the Soviets in Cuba, where they are violating our 150-year-old Monroe Doctrine, encouraged them to invade Afghanistan, intelligence sources avow.

Church anticipated the Afghanistan assault and tried to warn the administration. He issued a secret analysis, "Developments in Afghanistan and Possible Increased Soviet Intervention," which virtually predicted the invasion three months in advance.

At least one member of the president's inner circle has acknowledged that the committee's advice has been invaluable. The secret sessions with Carter's foreign policy advisers, he told my associate Dale Van Atta, "have been very frank."